

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-08 AID-05 CU-02 COME-00 TRSE-00 IO-13

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN, LY

SUBJECT: GOP EVALUATES LIBYA TRIP

REFS: A. PANAMA 2889; B. PANAMA 2942

SUMMARY: AN EVALUATION SESSION LAST WEEK, MEDIA COMMENTARY OVER THE WEEKEND AND A TORRIJOS INTERVIEW PUBLISHED SUNDAY HAVE ALL SOUGHT TO EMPHASIZE THE POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS OF TORRIJOS' TRIP TO LIBYA. HERE IS SOMETHING OF SILK PURSE OUT OF A SOW'S EAR TO IT ALL: WITH LIBYAN INVESTMENT AND INVESTMENT AND COMMERCE A PROSPECT RATHER THAN AN ACCOMPLISHMENT, REVOLUTIONARY PARALLELS AND SOME MUTUAL SOLIDARITY HAVE BEEN ABOUT ALL THAT THE PANAMANIAN CAN MAKE OUT OF THIS EPISODE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE INITIAL GOP SILENCE ON THE LIBYA TRIP'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS HAS BEEN FILLED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS. LAST THURSDAY, TORRIJOS AND HIS CORTEGE MET TO ASSESS THEIR JOURNEY. THE RESULT, AS IT GOT TO THE PUBLIC, WAS UNSURPRISING: THE TRIP WAS JUDGED INSTRUCTIVE AND

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BENEFICIAL. THE COMMERCIAL, CULTURAL AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS, THEY AGREED (SEE REF A), LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR BETTER AND MORE FRUITFUL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENTS.

2. MUCH WAS MADE OF REVOLUTIONARY PARALLELS IN THAT MEETING, SUBSEQUENT PRESS COMMENTARY AND TORRIJOS' WEEKEND INTERVIEW

PUBLISHED IN SUNDAY'S "DOMINICAL". (REF B COVERS INTERVIEW'S COMMENTS ON OTHER MATTERS.) TORRIJOS SAID THAT QADHAFI'S INVITATION SHOWED HOW MUCH IMPORTANCE PANAMA'S "CAUSE" IS GIVEN IN THE ARAB WORLD. HE EMPHASIZED THAT, CONTRARY TO WHAT MOST PEOPLE THOUGHT, HE DID NOT GO TO LIBYA HAT IN HAND; IT WAS POLITICAL SUPPORT RATHER THAN MONEY HE SOUGHT. HE DID NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT THE LIBYAN HIGH-LEVEL COMMISSION WILL BE ARRIVING HERE SHORTLY.

3. SUNDAY "DOMINICAL" EDITORIAL LAUDED THE VISIT AS A "HIGHLY POSITIVE" ONE. OTHER EDITORIAL COMMENT IN PRO-GOP ERS PRESS HAS ECHOED "MATUTINO'S" LINE. FEW HERE BELIEVE THAT TORRIJOS TRAVELLED 10,000 MILES JUST TO COMPARE NOTED ON RESPECTIVE REVOLUTIONS. SEVERAL MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY HAVE TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT MONEY WAS THE MAIN OBJECT, AND THAT HE DID NOT GET IT--AT LEAST NOT QUICKLY OR IN QUANTITY. HE AND SOME OF HIS ADVISORS, NEVERTHELESS, MAY BELIEVE THAT LIBYAN INVESTMENT AND TRADE WILL BE SIGNIFICANT. MOST OTHERS, US INCLUDED, ARE LESS SANGUINE. FEASIBILITY STUDIES, MARKET ANALYSES TAKE TIME; THE GOP NEEDS MONEY THIS YEAR. MOST IF NOT ALL PANAMANIANIANS HAVE BEEN SOVEREIGNLY UNINTERESTED IN THE TRIP, AND FEW APPEAR TO BE MUCH TAKEN WITH THE GOP ANALYSIS OF ITS "ACCOMPLISHMENTS".
JORDEN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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